



CONNECTICUT  
LEGAL  
RIGHTS  
PROJECT, INC.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF KATHLEEN FLAHERTY, ESQ.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CT LEGAL RIGHTS PROJECT, INC.  
PUBLIC HEARING RE: CONTINUATION OF EMERGENCY  
DECLARATIONS & LIMITED EXECUTIVE ORDERS  
FEBRUARY 8, 2022

Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg, Senator Somers, Senator Hwang,  
Representative Petit and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee:

Good afternoon. My name is Kathy Flaherty and I am the Executive Director of Connecticut Legal Rights Project (CLRP), a statewide non-profit agency that provides legal services to low income adults with serious mental health conditions. CLRP was established in 1990 pursuant to a Consent Order that mandated that the state provide funding for CLRP to protect the civil rights of DMHAS clients who are hospitalized, as well as those clients who are living in the community.

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I am submitting this statement today in support of continuing the vaccination requirement for workers in state hospitals. Our clients in DMHAS-operated inpatient psychiatric facilities live in close quarters. The virus arrives on those units via people who are participating in life in the community, something our clients are unable to do.

I also write in support of extending the protections accorded to tenants under Emergency Order 12D (in modified form) until all UniteCT funds have been expended, at which time those protections would sunset. These protections include:

- Stay of pending eviction cases with pending complete UniteCT applications until payment is made, or the application is denied;
- Service of a curable 30-day notice to quit;

- Suspension of the requirement that the landlord apply for UniteCT before serving a notice to quit for nonpayment and suspension of the requirement that the UniteCT flyer be attached to the notice to quit during any time period when the Department of Housing has suspended the acceptance of new UniteCT applications.

Tenants being able to maintain their housing during the pandemic has saved lives. Landlords can get paid via UniteCT, and once they accept payment they are supposed to withdraw any pending eviction action. Tenants with small arrearages may be able to make payment arrangements if given a reasonable opportunity to cure. We should not return to a 3-day notice to quit at this time.

I also am writing in support of a single statewide policy regarding mask mandates in schools. I do not think the residents of this state would be served well by having a patchwork of requirements that vary by school district. If the transmission numbers are such that scientists recommend wearing of masks in indoor settings, this state should have a single policy regarding the use of masks in schools. There are teachers and staff at high risk of Covid-19 whose school districts are unable to accommodate remote work; disabled students may be at high risk themselves or live with family members who are high risk.

Thank you for your consideration of these remarks.